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Candace Havens  
Director

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**WORKING SESSION MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** October 19, 2012

**TO:** Alderman Marcia Johnson, Chairman  
Members of the Zoning and Planning Committee

**FROM:** Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development  
James Freas, Chief Planner for Long Range Planning

**RE:** # 162-11(2): The Director of Planning and Development requesting a letter of support for the City of Newton Recreation and Open Space Plan Update, which may be viewed online at <http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/lrplan/os/>.

**MEETING DATE:** Working Session on October 22, 2012

**CC:** Board of Aldermen  
Donnalyn Kahn, City Solicitor

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The City of Newton is nearing completion in the process of updating its *Recreation and Open Space Plan Update*. The *Plan Update* expresses our collective vision for the City's open space and sets out priorities to enhance and protect our natural and recreational resources. An updated plan is also necessary to make the City eligible to apply for certain State funding programs. At this time, City staff is requesting a letter of support (attached) from the Board of Aldermen. If the Board agrees, this will be included as a part of the *Plan* for final submittal of the *Plan* to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) for comment. Following MAPC's review, the *Plan* will be submitted to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Division of Conservation Services for approval.

Following conclusion of an extended public comment period, the Recreation/Open Space Plan Advisory Committee reviewed the feedback and incorporated changes in the current document version. The Planning and Development Board held a public hearing on the *Draft Recreation and Open Space Plan Update* and, on August 6, 2012, approved the *Plan Update*. Materials relevant to the planning process and a copy of the final draft plan may be viewed at <http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/lrplan/os/>.

**ATTACHMENT A:** Draft letter of Support for the *City of Newton Recreation and Open Space Plan Update* from the Board of Aldermen, dated October 22, 2012

Draft letter of support for Recreation/Open Space Plan

Candace Havens  
Director of Planning and Development  
City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Candace:

The Board of Aldermen is pleased to support the Recreation and Open Space for 2013-2019 Plan Update for submission to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. We understand that acceptance of the Plan will enable the City to apply for several Recreation and Open Space grants from the Commonwealth.

We appreciate that your Department conducted an extensive outreach plan to seek input from as many interested citizens and groups as possible and that such input included a public workshop, a public survey, input from neighborhoods and others throughout the advisory committee work, a public hearing with an extended comment period. The planning process was guided by a broad-based advisory committee with representatives from a range of natural resource conservation, environmental, and recreation organizations, along with regional and City agencies.

The results of the broad citizen participation include an increased emphasis on maintaining the City's recreation and open spaces including the City's street trees. The Plan Update also supports new initiatives like the Upper Falls Greenway, access to it from the Charles River Pathway, the restoration of the Quinobequin Road trails, the use of the Cochituate Aqueduct Land and the Sudbury Aqueduct Land to establish new loop trails, and the establishment of new pathways across the Charles River in the Lower Falls/Auburndale area. We are pleased to see that the Plan Update encourages the establishment of new Friends groups to help carry out the purposes of the Plan Update in partnership with the City.

Congratulations on the completion of this Plan Update. We look forward to working with you and your Department on its implementation.

Sincerely,

Scott F. Lennon  
President of the Board of Aldermen